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From the Darling Ranges to the Swan

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From the Darling Ranges to the Swan Coastal Plain
(For B.H.G., B.M.G., I.M.P., and J.M.G.P.)
Joyce Parke (Ballajura, Western Australia)

After thirty-eight years in Darlington, a place
of roads as steep as learning, scarps as dense
as love, paths meandering like amity, dwellings
as manifold as interpretation, Alas moved to
Ballajura. Surveying her losses and gains, she

stretched to see what could be gleaned from this
territory of sand, lakes, plains. Of the frost or
fire brood, nurture saw her mood grow from sad
to glad – interested, rather than authoritarian.
This house with a garden, a verandah, a garage

and gates, smiles at her and at visitors who
will note the difference between argument and
discontent, find rigour in dissent and go for
a spell in the garden where shallots, chillies,
parsley, lemons, lettuce and kale provide

vitamin A and C — where daisies, a daffodil,
a plane tree, a banksia, a melaleuca, geraniums,
and a hibiscus offer vitamin be and see. Re-
turning inside, looking at her book shelves
carrying volumes speaking of pleas for

understanding, has her write, when solitary
again, that without a dweller there could not
be a sojourner, without a sojourner no
country to traverse, without country no
writers to cast an eye on eaves and leaves.